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The American Legion Magazine, a leader among national general-interest publications, is published monthly by The American Legion for its 1.6 million members. These wartime veterans, working through more than 12,000 community-level posts, dedicate themselves to God and Country and traditional American values; strong national security; adequate and compassionate care for veterans, their widows and orphans; community service; and the wholesome development of our nation's youth.

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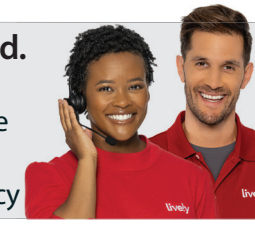

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The basis of our BASE program

The American Legion's common denominator is the bond we share through service in the U.S. Armed Forces. Our members understand what it means to choose the military way of life. They know the rigors, hazards and uncertainties of service, as well as issues that can affect health, quality of life, family stability and economic outlook after discharge. We also appreciate the pathways of opportunity only possible through military service. In short, we've been there, done that.

That's why the Legion's National Security Commission has launched an initiative built purely on the military experience – specifically, to improve it where needed – and assist in whatever form that may take, from support for commissaries to military spouse employment to understanding VA benefits for those about to separate. The Base Assessment and Servicemember Experience (BASE) program strives to strengthen connections between The American Legion and the Department of Defense, active-duty installations, National Guard armories and reserve centers worldwide.

These connections are already established in many military communities, from U.S. Army Garrison Ansbach in Germany to Naval Station Norfolk, Va. The BASE Program aims to augment those relationships by assessing ways in which The American Legion can help with such issues as food insecurity, access to health services, child care and career opportunities, to name a few.

In a time of escalating geopolitical tensions, the security of our country hinges on a strong, motivated and capable defense force that can respond to emerging threats. Failing to do so leaves us vulnerable. Beyond the quality-of-life needs of our military personnel, the U.S. Armed Forces must be properly equipped, trained and supported to maintain strength in the global arena.

As veterans who know both sides of the equation, we are uniquely well-suited to help make differences that truly improve our national security and live up to the motto "Veterans Strengthening America."

THE AMERICAN Legion MAGAZINE

Veterans Strengthening America

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Honor and remembrance

The cover of the May *American Legion Magazine* certainly qualifies as "Cover of the Year," in my opinion. The image of Sgt. Maj. Darrell Carver contemplating those who were buried in France after giving their all during World War I stirred my heart. This Marine has Bronze Star and Purple Heart medals on his uniform, among many others, signifying his devotion to his country, flag and Constitution.

The Rev. Sam Laswell, first vice commander, American Legion Post 271, Redford, Mich.

The Misinformation Age

Thank you for the article on media literacy by Alan Greenblatt (May). I was drafted in 1970 to serve as a medic, and had already joined the organization now known as the International Council for Media Literacy. I spent years teaching children about this and how to tell their own stories, the ones often left out of the media. I now write a monthly column encouraging adults to tell important stories to the children in their lives. Topics include veteran stories, social justice and more. A recent column focused on media literacy, which is important (as your article says) for people of all ages.

Larry Johnson, Golden Valley, Minn.

While some of what Alan Greenblatt says may be true, it is the proven disinformation and lies from mainstream media that have raised people's reliance on social media. Granted, you'd better do your research there as well. It was the removal of the laws forbidding mainstream media from certain reporting that has escalated this issue, not social media platforms. They are just following suit.

William Ingram, Coeur d'Alene, Idaho

Legion fun in the sun

Hezzie Griffis American Legion Post 30 in Edgefield, S.C., hosted its first Family Day in late April, with food, music, outdoor games, and displays of World War II vehicles and vintage military radios. Children received emblem souvenir bags and rode in a firetruck; raffle winners took home gift certificates from local businesses, and families got acquainted with the colorfully decorated post home. Throughout the day, Post 30 and Auxiliary members talked with visitors about the many ways the Legion is ready to help their community, and signed up new members.

– Submitted by Post 30 Vice Commander Winston Boddie

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DDP Yoga

Imagine my surprise to see DDP Yoga mentioned in the magazine (The FOB, May). I've been doing this for a few years now. Doing yoga with dynamic tension, similar to Charles Atlas, I've lost weight and gained flexibility. I recommend it for all ages. There are several different programs (beginners, chair, bed), as well as veteran discounts.

Dale Lash, Mauston, Wis.

A Brief Guide to Fats

Thank you for the article by Jennifer Campbell (Living Well, May). Fats in the diet are very confusing to understand – good and bad cholesterol, and how they affect you. She gives great examples of which foods contribute to each. I was happy to learn that most of the healthy fats listed are ones I enjoy.

Allen Pelc, Marysville, Mich.

Geopolitical Geometry

Alan W. Dowd's article (March) is an eye-opener. But his last paragraph misses the critical point about how corporate America's unbridled greed helped make China the military behemoth it has become. It should read as follows: "Ensuring that the 21st century isn't Made in China – and keeping the Indo-Pacific, well, Pacific – will depend not on an all-for-one fortress like NATO, but rather a responsible decision by American corporate boardrooms to reverse their dependance on cheap Chinese labor."

Bruce Robtoy, Windsor Locks, Conn.

***THE AMERICAN LEGION MAGAZINE* WELCOMES YOUR OPINIONS**

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The American Legion Magazine,
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THE PLAYLIST

American Legion videos you don't want to miss.

A Vietnam Seabee's vow

Photo by Hilary Ott

This four-part video series tells of longtime Legionnaire David O. Warnken's combat experience in the Vietnam War, the difficult adjustment process of coming home and the life he has spent in memory of his fellow Seabees, many of whom did not come home.

The four episodes, produced by Hilary Ott of the American Legion Media & Communications Division, can all be viewed on The American Legion's YouTube channel and at **legion.org/legiontv**.

Photo by Hilary Ott

Register for 2023 Legacy Run

Registration for the 2023 American Legion Legacy Run ends Aug. 9. The five-day, 1,100-mile ride will leave American Legion Post 6 in Kokomo, Ind., on Aug. 20 and travel through Michigan, Ohio, West Virginia, Virginia, Kentucky and Tennessee before the final stop on the Hendrick Motorsports campus in Concord, N.C., on Aug. 24.

The motorcycle ride raises funds for the American Legion Legacy Scholarship Fund, which provides financial assistance with college for children of U.S. military personnel killed while on active duty on or after Sept. 11, 2001, as well as for children of post-9/11 veterans with a combined VA disability rating of 50% or greater. Last year's ride raised a record $1,324,548 – the eighth time the Legacy Run has surpassed $1 million.

Register and learn more at **legion.org/riders/registration**. For additional information, email **legacyrun@legion.org**.

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Whereas ...

As the spouse or dependent child of a veteran or servicemember, one may qualify for certain benefits, like health care, life insurance, or money to help pay for school or training ...

As the survivor of a veteran or servicemember, one may qualify for added benefits, including help with burial costs and survivor compensation ...

The Code of Federal Regulations further defines and codifies the term "child" in the general and permanent rules and regulations known as the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Title 38, Chapter I, Part 3, Subpart A, Section § 3.57 – Child, dated July 1, 2020: *"(3) Subject to the provisions of paragraphs (c) and (e) of this section, the term child also includes a person who became permanently incapable of self-support before reaching the age of 18 years, who was a member of the veteran's household at the time he or she became 18 years of age, and who was adopted by the veteran, regardless of the age of such person at the time of adoption"* ...

Veterans have married or remarried and have the legal right to exercise parental control and responsibility for the welfare and care of a child with the sole and legal obligation and responsibility of a child's support after such child has reached the age of 18 years old who is permanently incapable of self-support and who has been permanently incapable of self-support since birth ...

Be it resolved ...

The American Legion supports legislation to amend the CFR ... to read: *"Subject to the provisions of paragraphs (c) and (e) of this section, the term child also includes a person who became permanently incapable of self-support, who is a member of the veteran's household, and who was adopted by the veteran, regardless of age of such person at the time of adoption."*

Passed, American Legion National Executive Committee, Oct. 12-13, 2022

$1.4 million+

2023 American Legion Legacy Scholarship funds awarded to 321 applicants, the highest amount ever

$800,000

Approximate amount in American Legion Child Welfare Foundation funds awarded to 16 youth-serving nonprofits for 2023

$5,000

Donation from Atkins Saw American Legion Post 355 in Indianapolis to the National Emergency Fund in mid-April

Did you catch these special Tango Alpha Lima guests?

Don't miss interesting and entertaining interviews relating to the military and veterans community on The American Legion's weekly podcast.

"We need to do more to address the number of veterans who are dying by suicide each year."

Terri Tanielian, special assistant to the president for veterans affairs. Tanielian's father, a Vietnam War Navy veteran, died by suicide.

"It's kind of like the art rejects."

Four-time Emmy winner **Robert Ham,** who graduated from the University of Southern California School of Cinematic Arts Master of Fine Arts program. His new documentary, "Interpreters Wanted," tells the story of Afghan men who chose to work with U.S. troops.

"The first rule of fight church is punch somebody in the face."

John Renken, a former Army Airborne Ranger, six-time MMA world champion and founder of multiple churches. He is now the chief executive officer for Sales Platoon.

Check out these episodes and more than 180 others at **legion.org/tangoalphalima**.

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HEALTH & FITNESS BY JENNIFER CAMPBELL

Arm yourself with antioxidants

Envato

We're told that antioxidants are good for us, but why? What are they, and how do we get enough of them in our diets?

Antioxidants are naturally occurring chemicals in foods that fight free radicals, which are unstable molecules that can accumulate in our cells and damage DNA, proteins and lipids. The result is an increased risk of cancer and other diseases.

Free radicals can lead to:

- Deterioration of the eye lens, contributing to vision loss
- Joint inflammation and arthritis
- Damage to brain nerve cells, increasing the risk of Alzheimer's and Parkinson's diseases
- Certain cancers, caused by damaging DNA within cells
- Increased risk of heart disease
- Accelerated aging

Antioxidants may prevent or delay these and other kinds of cell damage.

Color matters Diets rich in colorful fruits and vegetables are great sources of healthy antioxidants. Evidence suggests the naturally occurring antioxidants in food are more beneficial than the use of supplements.

Flavonoids, the natural pigments that give plants their color, are high in antioxidants. Choose organic produce when possible; some food manufacturers use dyes to make fruits and vegetables more vibrant and appealing.

Lycopene and anthocyanins give red fruits and vegetables their color. They're found in tomatoes, red peppers, strawberries, raspberries and red beans. Loaded with vitamin C, vitamin A and potassium, they improve heart function, keep bones strong and provide neurological benefits.

Carotenoids are found in yellow and orange fruits and vegetables, including carrots, peaches, squash and pineapple. Packed with vitamin C, vitamin A and potassium, they help boost immune function and enhance vision.

Chlorophyll, lutein and zeaxanthin make up green pigments, which provide lots of potassium and vitamin K, aid in blood clotting and protect the heart.

Green fruits and vegetables also help maintain strong bones, teeth and healthy vision. Dark leafy greens have the highest amounts of antioxidants and fiber.

Phenolic flavonoids are found in blue- and purple-colored foods like blueberries, blackberries, purple grapes, purple onions, purple cabbage and eggplant. They improve urinary tract health, memory function and help promote healthy aging, and are especially dense in antioxidants.

Other sources of antioxidants include:

- **Allium sulphur compounds** (leeks, onions, garlic)
- **Catechins** (red wine, tea)
- **Copper** (seafood, lean meat, milk, nuts)
- **Cryptoxanthins** (red capsicum, pumpkin, mangoes)
- **Flavonoids** (tea, green tea, citrus fruits, red wine, onions, apples)
- **Indoles** (cruciferous vegetables such as broccoli, cabbage and cauliflower)
- **Isoflavonoids** (soybeans, tofu, lentils, peas, milk)
- **Lignans** (sesame seeds, bran, whole grains, vegetables)
- **Manganese** (seafood, lean meat, milk, nuts)
- **Polyphenols** (herbs)
- **Selenium** (seafood, Brazil nuts, lean meat, whole grains)
- **Vitamin A** (liver, sweet potatoes, carrots, milk, egg yolks)
- **Vitamin C** (bell peppers, oranges, blackcurrants, kiwi, mangoes, broccoli, spinach, strawberries)

Army veteran Jennifer Campbell is a certified personal trainer with a master's degree in nutrition education. She is past commander of the California American Legion's 24th District and Hollywood Post 43.

Living Well is designed to provide general information. It is not intended to be, nor is it, medical advice. Readers should consult their physicians when they have health problems.

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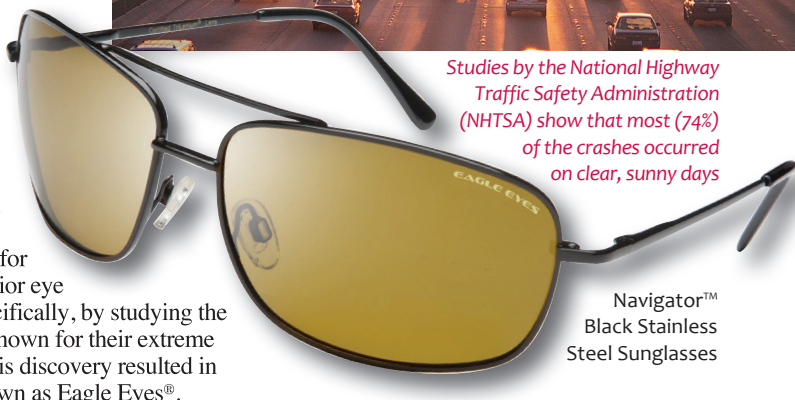
To some, sunglasses are a fashion accessory…

But When Driving, These Sunglasses May Save Your Life!

Drivers' Alert: Driving can expose you to more dangerous glare than any sunny day at the beach can… do you know how to protect yourself?

Studies by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) show that most (74%) of the crashes occurred on clear, sunny days



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The sun rises and sets at peak travel periods, during the early morning and afternoon rush hours and many drivers find themselves temporarily blinded while driving directly into the glare of the sun. Deadly accidents are regularly caused by such blinding glare with danger arising from reflected light off another vehicle, the pavement, or even from waxed and oily windshields that can make matters worse. Early morning dew can exacerbate this situation. Yet, motorists struggle on despite being blinded by the sun's glare that can cause countless accidents every year.

Not all sunglasses are created equal. Protecting your eyes is serious business. With all the fancy fashion frames out there it can be easy to overlook what really matters—the lenses. So we did our research and looked to the very best in optic innovation and technology.

Sometimes it does take a rocket scientist. A NASA rocket scientist. Some ordinary sunglasses can obscure your vision by exposing your eyes to harmful UV rays, blue light, and reflective glare. They can also darken useful vision-enhancing light. But now, independent research conducted by scientists from NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory has brought forth ground-breaking technology to help protect human eyesight from the harmful effects of solar radiation light. This superior lens technology was first discovered when NASA scientists looked to nature for a means to superior eye protection—specifically, by studying the eyes of eagles, known for their extreme visual acuity. This discovery resulted in what is now known as Eagle Eyes®.

Slip on a pair of Eagle Eyes® and everything instantly appears more vivid and sharp. You'll immediately notice that your eyes are more comfortable and relaxed and you'll feel no need to squint. The scientifically designed sunglasses are not just fashion accessories—they are necessary to protect your eyes from those harmful rays produced by the sun during peak driving times.

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A patient advocate can help navigate your health-care journey.

BY BETH W. ORENSTEIN

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When you or a loved one are diagnosed with a serious illness or chronic condition, it's normal to feel frightened and confused, and full of questions. How do I get the best care? How do I afford treatment? Should I get a second opinion?

This is where a patient advocate can be especially helpful, says Caitlin Donovan, senior director of the Patient Advocate Foundation (PAF).

The concept of a patient advocate isn't new. They've also been called health advocates, patient or health navigators, care or case managers, and ombudsmen. An advocate can also be a spouse, relative, friend or caregiver you trust.

One of the most common requests for patient advocates is help with billing and finding ways to cut medical costs, Donovan says. They can assist in getting answers about what your health insurance covers and research options if you lack coverage.

Other ways patient advocates assist include:

• Helping make medical appointments, from regular visits to tests, treatment and/or therapy.
• Finding social support groups or local agencies serving people with similar health conditions.
• Help applying for programs that pay for food, rent, transportation and other essentials while ill.
• Accompanying you to appointments and asking questions about your condition and/or treatment.

How to find a patient advocate PAF offers free case-management services focusing on billing and medical costs to people or caregivers dealing with one of about 500 serious or chronic health conditions listed at **patientadvocate.org**.

A person can also hire a professional advocate. Many organizations list advocates on their websites, including the Alliance of Professional Health Advocates (**aphadvocates.org**) and the National Association of Healthcare Advocacy (**nahac.com**). Before hiring an advocate, ask for references and experience; no state requires patient advocates to be licensed, and none offer national accreditation.

Beth W. Orenstein of Northampton, Pa., is a freelance medical writer and regular contributor to Living Well.

Rare tick-borne illness gains foothold in America

Babesiosis is a rare tick-borne disease spreading in the United States, particularly in the Northeast. Symptoms include headache, fever, chills and body aches. Older adults, people without spleens and those with weakened immune systems are at higher risk of severe or life-threatening illness.

The CDC recommends removing ticks from the skin as soon as they are discovered. Use clean tweezers to grasp the tick as close to the skin's surface as possible, pulling upward with steady, even pressure. Twisting or jerking the tick can cause parts of its mouth to break off and remain in the skin. Don't use your fingers; a cotton swab is another option. Clean the bite area with rubbing alcohol or soap and water. If you develop a rash or fever, contact your doctor.

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‘Our gift to ourselves’

National Park Service Director Chuck Sams talks about his responsibility – and ours – to care for America’s natural treasures.

BY MATT GRILLS
PHOTOS BY JULIA CUMES

With 424 sites spanning 850 million acres – including parks, historic sites, monuments, battlefields, lakeshores, seashores, riverways, scenic trails and recreation areas – the National Park Service (NPS) has one of America’s highest charges to keep.

Since 1916, NPS has maintained and managed lands considered to be the nation’s crown jewels – a duty that encompasses not only preservation but, in many places, education and interpretation. For Charles “Chuck” Sams III, the agency’s 19th director and the first Native American to serve in the position, the entire enterprise boils down to one word: stewardship.

Whether that’s rock carvings at Petrified Forest in Arizona or the Tuskegee Airmen hangars in Alabama, the National Park Service’s 20,000 employees are custodians of a continent-spanning story that belongs to all Americans.

“If we are to continue to be America’s best idea, we must be the stewards of those things, not just for ourselves but for seven generations down the road,” Sams says.

A Gulf War Navy veteran, Sams served as an intelligence specialist with Medium Attack Squadron 155, the “Silver Foxes.” Embarked on the carrier USS *Ranger*, he worked as a mission planner developing strike packages for air crews in the push to evict Iraqi forces from Kuwait.

Sams continued his service as a reservist, assigned to Joint Intelligence Command Pacific and Headquarters Defense Intelligence Agency. With degrees in business administration and indigenous people law, he has three decades of experience in the natural resources field, serving in state and tribal government and the nonprofit conservation sector.

He’s also a past commander and adjutant of George Denis Post 140 in Mission, Ore., where he’s still an active member. “I appreciate the Legion’s work with younger veterans,” he says, “especially as they transition to civilian life.”

Sams recently spoke with *The American Legion Magazine* about his love for America’s national parks, their enduring ties to the military and veterans, his priorities as director and more.

How did your native heritage and background shape your love of the land?

I was born in Portland but raised in Northeast Oregon on the Umatilla Indian Reservation near the town of Pendleton, and I'm Walla Walla and Cayuse. We have a foundational belief system that tells us when we were created as humans we received our eyesight from the eagle, our hearing from the owl, our skin from the elk, and our nervous system and blood-carrying system from the plants. There was a promise, though, that once we were made human beings we would be the stewards of both the flora and fauna, and that was central to my understanding of who I was as an individual and as a member of my tribe.

My grandfather, the late Charles F. Sams Sr., and his brothers all fought during the Second World War, and so I grew up around the ethos that we were a warrior society. Not only did we have the responsibility of stewarding the resources, but we were to protect those resources, and we would do so by joining the military. So when I graduated high school, I took off two weeks later to join the Navy.

You're part of a long line of military service, then.

My father served during the Vietnam era. He worked in signals as a radioman. My grandfather served as a gunner's mate in the Second World War, aboard USS *Converse*. And his brothers, my great-uncles, served in North Africa and the Italian campaign and eventually the invasion of Europe. Those six boys served all over the place, and I grew up with a lot of stories about their experiences, good and bad. But I always marveled at that ideal that it was important you give back to your nation, and that was twofold in my case. We ceded our lands to the United States, and in return the United States was supposed to be our protector. Since 1855, my tribe has fought alongside the United States in all its wars. So I knew from a very young age that I would join the service.

Besides the parks, NPS manages and maintains dozens of battlefields, monuments and historical sites. As a veteran, what does that responsibility mean to you?

I tell the story of being a young sailor finishing A school in Virginia Beach, and we had a two-week period between classes. Four of us went from Maine to Florida visiting as many national parks and monuments as we could. A good number on the East Coast honor our veterans. As someone in their first year of military service, I saw that long line and continuity, and the importance of a volunteer military in particular. We live in a free country, and it comes at a price. The National Park Service interpretive staff who tell

On April 22, Sams kicked off National Park Week with a daylong visit to Cape Cod National Seashore.

Highland House Museum In North Truro, Sams joined Wampanoag tribal leaders at a blessing of the land ceremony and groundbreaking for the construction of a wetu, or traditional dwelling.

Race Point Sams met with members of the Massachusetts Beach Buggy Association and participated in a beach cleanup.

Duck Harbor NPS staff updated Sams on the first phase of the Herring River Restoration Project, which will revive 1,100 acres of tidal salt marsh – and, in time, an ecologically thriving estuary.

Marconi Wireless Station Site At an International Marconi Day event hosted by the Marconi Cape Cod Radio Club (KM1CC), Sams made a scheduled contact with W1AW at the American Radio Relay League headquarters in Newington, Conn., broadcasting from the site of the first public transatlantic wireless message in 1903.

you these stories tell it with great passion, but they tell it truthfully and openly without leading you to a conclusion.

When I was at Antietam, we showed up late after spending most of our day at Gettysburg, and a park staff member told us that the gates would close within an hour. He took the time to talk about the 5,000 buried at the national cemetery and then took us to Antietam Creek to talk about the battle itself. Years later, I came to recognize he wasn't an interpretive ranger. He was actually part of the maintenance staff.

I've traveled to over 60 parks in the last year, in 26 states. It doesn't matter if you're an interpretive ranger or a natural resource ranger, or part of the maintenance or administrative staff. The staff of the National Park Service know the history of their parks and they're excited to tell the story.

Sounds like that early road trip made a deep impression on you.

I was a lowly E-3 with no money. (laughs) We couldn't think of a better way to spend those two weeks than to go to the national parks and camp along the way. A white kid from New Jersey, an African American kid from the Chicago area, a Hispanic kid from Texas, and me, a Native American kid from Oregon – we all had different experiences based on our ethnicities and backgrounds, but it was great to talk about it. We talked about slavery, the Spanish American War, civil rights and rioting, all these things. Parks offer you that immersion into the American experience I don't think you can find anywhere else. I felt it more alive than I did learning it in high school, even taking history classes in college, because it was living history.

America's parks and the military have strong ties, going back to cavalry troops serving as some of the first park rangers. How does that special relationship continue today?

Prior to the establishment of the National Park Service, yes, the Army was predominately responsible for protecting our national parks, whether that was at Yellowstone or Yosemite. Many of those soldiers and cavalrymen ended up doing interpretation of those parks. Come 1916, with the passing of the Organic Act, the National Park Service ended up adopting a lot of retired soldiers into the system. Many of our first park superintendents were retired lieutenant colonels and colonels. Not only did we have these large, iconic national parks in our system, but a number of military memorials and monuments were put in our charge.

Twenty-four percent of my work force is veterans, and we still wear the green and gray – uniforms that pretty much match what the military was wearing in 1916. So we have that very strong connection. Each of our superintendents, he or she, are captains of their own ship, but they follow the structure under which we provide resources and guidance from regional offices and the headquarters in Washington, D.C. We have a lot of elements from our relationship with the Army that still play out today as a civilian organization, and as you can see from the staff, they have the discipline of being able to do a lot with very little at times.

What are you doing to increase the number of veterans working or volunteering for NPS?

We have a number of national battlefields up and down the East Coast, and American Indian battlefields out west, and so we're able to attract

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Sams' favorite national park is Grand Teton, where his wife, Lori, worked as a concessioner while in college. When their three oldest children were 12, 10 and 8, the family camped there for a week, hiking in the mountains, swimming in the crystal-clear lakes and floating down the Snake River. "You could see the spark in their eyes as they were enjoying the outdoors and understanding what it meant to preserve and protect these places … to make sure you take only what you need and that you don't take things off the land, that you give back to the land itself."

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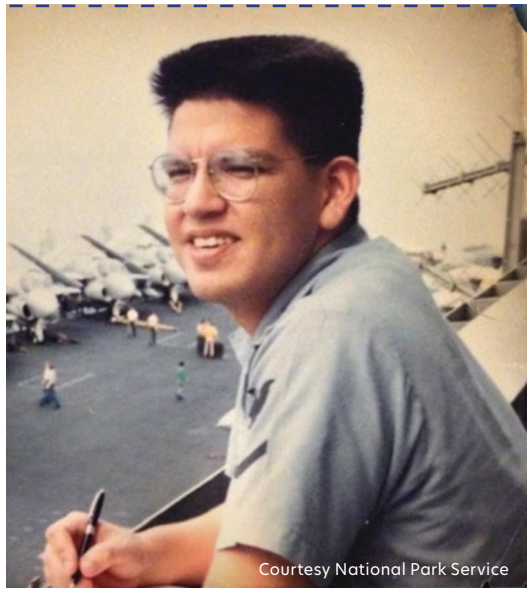
a lot of veterans who have a strong sense of service but also have a strong interest in history. And many of our volunteers who worked as mechanics and other trades within the service bring their talents to the National Park Service.

We have a direct-hire program in partnership with the Department of Defense where we're working with a number of craftspeople, to take them through our program so they can transition with their federal years of the military. Whether that's after four years or 20, they can come into the National Park Service, and we're able to harness their skills to continue to serve in a different way and in a different uniform.



Courtesy National Park Service

Three officers had a strong influence on Sams during his Navy years. Retired Capt. John Dullum, then a lieutenant junior grade, "always made sure I had what I needed to do my job, made sure I was fed, made sure I had my berthing." Capt. Frank Sweigart, commanding officer of VA-155, "amazed me. He had 250 men under his command, and knew all our names and our families." At the top was Adm. Ronald "Zap" Zlatoper, commanding Battle Group Echo, who made clear that he trusted those under him to know their jobs and do them well.

"They taught me a lot about servant leadership – that you really have to know the people you're in charge of, and to show compassion and caring while having the discipline necessary to run an organization."

You've said you want to boost park service staff and address a massive maintenance backlog. Where is NPS on these priorities?

Our backlog on deferred maintenance repairs is second only to DoD, and we're second only to DoD in the number of assets we own … nearly $300 billion worth. The last big influx of funding came between 1956 and 1966, called Mission 66, in celebration of the 50th year of the National Park Service. Advance 60 years, the Great American Outdoors Act comes, and is now the single largest investment that we're seeing.

Our staff do a wonderful job of maintaining facilities, but it's not been easy. When we first looked at it, we weren't calculating our deferred maintenance up to industry standards, and so it was believed it was only at about $11 billion. Once we were able to do a physical examination, that number doubled. The investments we're making through the Great American Outdoors Act are tackling those large issues – whether that's a water treatment plant, septic system, roadway or bridge – so we can keep these places open for the enjoyment of the American people.

We are down 19% in staff from 2011, yet we've seen a 20% increase of people coming into the park system. We also have 30 more parks. So we have more resources, more land, more assets to protect and preserve and enhance for Americans' enjoyment. Yet we were down by 19%. The Inflation Reduction Act helps close that gap. It provides us 5,000 FTEs dedicated to staff and boots on the ground in the parks, not in regional offices and not at headquarters.

Other issues include park access and crowding, especially post-COVID. What's happening there?

The first time you see the quote "America is loving its parks to death" is in public testimony in 1978, by the National Park Service itself. Here we are, 45 years later, and crowding is taking a toll on our ability to manage access in and out of the parks. Fortunately, we have some of the best social scientists within NPS, and we have a

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number of tools at our disposal to figure out how we can manage that access, including being able to use GIS (Geographic Information Systems) and other technical types of services to model what that looks like. What might work at Acadia might not work at Zion, and we try to tailor those accesses based on where the park is, what the local community needs, and the current road and infrastructure system.

While I don't like restrictions through timed entry personally, what we're seeing from the information we've gotten back, especially in the past year, is that people are finding that it works better for them. They can find a place to park, they can enjoy the park a little better, and we're seeing positive attitudes from the surrounding communities. We're trying to work hand in hand with the general public, and with our own staff, in figuring out the access issue.

You've talked about tribal co-management as a path to helping restore the state of some public lands. Describe those efforts.

My best example is the wildland fires out west. What we now know and better understand is that while every tribal member before contact may not have been agriculturalists, they were at least horticulturalists. What everybody else has called wild we've always called home, and for thousands of years we maintained the forest beds. We ensured those areas received natural and manmade fire so there were healthy grasslands and meadows, a healthy undercarriage under the forest that didn't build itself up. But for the last 80+ years we've consistently said all fire is bad, and the moment a fire strike happens – either by lightning or manmade – we instantly put it out. These fuels built up, and we're seeing the results of that.

The National Park Service is working more cooperatively with tribes across the United States, particularly in the West, doing prescribed burns. At Great Smoky, the superintendent has been working closely with the Cherokee Nation, their fire crews and our fire crews together, to start burning some of that undercarriage so that we're not seeing what we've seen out west.

Through co-management and co-stewardship, we have an opportunity to work with tribes that have been doing this for thousands of years, learn the lessons from them and start applying them within the Park Service.

What other challenges are you taking on?

Two issues surprised me coming into this position. One was housing. (The Airbnb model) has really blossomed over the last decade, but it's taken a lot of lease and rental properties off the market that our staff used to have available to them as they came in as seasonal workers or moved site to site. We need to improve the housing we have within the park system – modernize it and, in some cases, demolish and rebuild. We've done that at Yosemite, at Yellowstone and at Grand Teton, but we're also using the funds to lease housing.

If you don't have a roof over your head it's hard to do your job, and if you can't afford that roof over your head, it's that much harder. This fiscal year (FY24), I've asked for $15 million to tackle it, and we have another $100 million in projects and line items that are going toward housing over the next two years.

The other issue, which was a little more disappointing, was the amount of low morale within the park service. There had been a lot of bullying, sexual harassment, lack of accountability and discipline, and we've hit that head on. We want to ensure that people have a safe work environment, that they're respected for what they do. We want an engaged workforce that understands everything from the bottom up, and from the top down, and the only way that works is if you have clear communication. I learned that from the Navy.

What message do you want to give Americans about the park system?

I want the American people to know that the parks are theirs. This is our gift to ourselves as Americans, and they should get out there and see their parks and to engage not just in recreation and with the flora and fauna, but to engage with the deep and rich history that is us as America.

Matt Grills is managing editor of The American Legion Magazine.

For the Man Who Gives Everything and Expects Nothing

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AMAZING RACE

Alex Palou puts Legion's Be the One initiative in national spotlight with GMR Grand Prix win, fourth-place Indy 500 finish.

BY STEVEN B. BROOKS

Photos by Hilary Ott

Alex Palou was disappointed he didn't win the Indianapolis 500 after starting from the pole May 28 in the No. 10 American Legion Honda. The Chip Ganassi Racing (CGR) driver had led nearly a fourth of the race's laps when, on lap 95, he was pinned into the wall by Rinus VeeKay during a pit stop. The damage sustained meant the No. 10 car needed a new nose cone, and though it was quickly repaired, it dropped Palou – who'd been running in the top 5 and led 36 laps at that point – down to 28th.

In the final 100 or so laps, Palou battled back and showed why he was so successful in the Legion car throughout May. He fought his way to a fourth-place finish and capped a thrilling month by driving the Legion's Be the One suicide-prevention initiative further into the national spotlight.

In the most dominant performance for any driver in the 2023 NTT INDYCAR Series, Palou won the GMR Grand Prix on May 13 by nearly 17 seconds in the No. 10 Legion car. He followed that up with a record-setting performance in winning the Indianapolis 500 pole. His success – and the message behind the Legion's sponsorship of the car – garnered national attention for Be the One in multiple media outlets.

"Obviously we wanted to do more, because I felt like we had more, and it was going to be awesome for the American Legion Be the One initiative," Palou said. "We still made it a different way, I think, by winning the Grand Prix, winning the pole and making a good comeback to the top four. So, overall, I feel really happy.

"It just makes me feel different winning a race when people tell me they've had family that's been helped by The American Legion because of what we do. We'll keep on doing it. We'll keep on spreading the Be the One initiative, and we'll keep on trying to help veterans."

Palou's CGR teammate Marcus Ericsson – driving the No. 8 Huski Chocolate Honda that also had American Legion branding – nearly repeated as Indy 500 champ. He was leading with four laps to go before a three-car accident moved the race to a yellow flag that became a red flag – the record third competition-related red of the race. That meant the cars would have a one-lap finish for the checkered flag.

Ericsson held the lead through turns 1 and 2, but Josef Newgarden passed Ericsson on the back straightaway and help him off to win the race by .0974 seconds, the fourth-closest finish in Indianapolis 500 history.

Steven B. Brooks is social media manager for the American Legion Media & Communications Division.

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WAR ON TWO WHEELS

Harley-Davidson's military history dates to 1916, with a boom in bike production during the 1940s.

Childhood friends William Harley and Arthur Davidson built an iconic American brand in 1903 that is visible today across the nation's roadways – one deeply familiar, if not beloved, by the American Legion Riders. The brand, of course, is Harley-Davidson.

The venerable motorcycle company started in a 10-by-15-foot backyard shed in Milwaukee. More than a century later, its corporate headquarters stands on the same site as its original home, occupying four city blocks and approximately 500,000 square feet.

This month, Harley-Davidson celebrates 120 years in business – and a proud legacy of U.S. military service.

– *Cameran Richardson*

Harley-Davidson WLA model, 1942
Photo courtesy Harley-Davidson

100,000+
Number of soldiers taught to operate and repair motorcycles at the Harley-Davidson Quartermaster School during World War II, including service in harsh field conditions with limited tools

'Uncle Sam's choice'

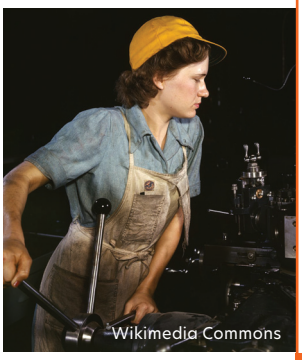
Photo courtesy Harley-Davidson

'When the United States entered the Great War, Harley-Davidson again answered the call to service. The government purchased a third of the company's production between 1917 and 1918, making Harley-Davidson "Uncle Sam's choice." By war's end, about 20,000 Harley-Davidson motorcycles were in use by the Army. The Harley-Davidson Quartermaster School instructed military mechanics in the care and maintenance of their machines, a training effort that continued as the Harley-Davidson Service School and exists today as Harley-Davidson University.

Photo courtesy Harley-Davidson

On Nov. 12, 1918, one day after the armistice is signed, ***Army Cpl. Roy Holtz*** *of Wisconsin is the first American to set foot in Germany while riding a Harley-Davidson.*

Reporting for duty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Before the United States entered World War II, Harley-Davidson was shipping motorcycles to England and Russia as part of the Lend-Lease Act of 1941, with some 30,000 alone sent to the Soviet army. Following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Harley-Davidson's civilian production nearly ceased as its focus shifted to helping America win the war. To keep up with production, the company hired women – "Rosie the Riveters" – to operate light machinery. In total, Harley-Davidson shipped nearly 90,000 military vehicles and even more parts.

$28 million+ Motorcycle parts produced by Harley-Davidson between 1940 and 1945. To this day, these parts are used to rebuild bikes of that era.

Following World War II, Harley-Davidson saw a boom in sales thanks to the high number of veterans who used them during their military service. As Arthur Davidson predicted, postwar sales would be "favored by the big new market comprising soldiers now using motorcycles." Overall production topped 20,000 bikes for the 1947 model year.

1916 Harley-Davidson receives its first military orders during the Mexican Border Campaign. Gen. John Pershing, leader of the Army's 8th Brigade, notes the motorcycle's "agility and ease of operation," and 24 bikes with sidecar gun carriages that could carry 6,000 rounds of ammunition are provided.

1918 Harley-Davidson's FUS Army F-Head model is used by the American Expeditionary Forces in France for dispatch work.

1940 Harley-Davidson introduces the WLA, named the "workhorse of wartime American motorcycles." After the United States enters World War II, production of the WLA ramps up as it becomes a dispatch and courier motorcycle for the Army. By war's end, 70,000 WLAs are in service.

1943 For its wartime efforts, Harley-Davidson is awarded the Army-Navy "E Award" for three consecutive years for exceptional performance in the production of war materiel. The award was given to less than 2% of the 90,000 U.S. factories making war products.

Three prototypes of the XS model with sidecar were built for desert terrain before the government canceled its order and used Jeep 4x4s instead. An XS in the Harley-Davidson Museum is the only remaining one.

Photo courtesy Harley-Davidson

Envato

FLAG WAVERS

Freedom-hungry people around the world remind us that it's OK to love America.

BY ALAN W. DOWD

Polling shows that Americans born between 1981 and 2004 (the millennial generation and Generation Z) are less proud of America than older generational cohorts, less likely to embrace the concept of American exceptionalism than older generations, and more likely than older generations to view the U.S. flag as a symbol of imperialism, greed or intolerance, rather than a symbol of freedom.

This is largely the result of inadequate and/or inaccurate civic education. The way to reverse this decades-long trend, however, is not through civic education that's uncritical of U.S. history. After all, one of the characteristics that makes America exceptional – and indeed strengthens America – is our capacity for self-criticism, which leads to self-correction. But after being taught in our classrooms and by our culture that America is no better than – perhaps worse than – other countries, many members of these younger generations engage not in healthy self-criticism that leads to necessary course corrections, but rather in moral relativism that results in the patriotism gap revealed by polls.

What Americans need is more complete, more accurate civic education. Ironically, the best place to begin this effort is overseas. Much of the world sees America in a much better light than Americans see themselves.

AP

Ukraine Let's start on the frontlines of freedom. American flag patches have been Velcroed onto the helmets of Ukrainian soldiers defending Snake Island and the flak jackets of the liberators of Kherson. President Volodymyr Zelensky explains why: "For almost 250 years, the men and women of the United States Armed Forces have prevailed against tyranny, often against great odds .... Your example inspires Ukrainians today to fight back against Russian tyranny."

Belarus, Georgia and Kosovo When they rallied in Minsk against the sham re-election of Belarusian strongman Alexander Lukashenko in 2020, protesters used that universal symbol of freedom and defiance: the U.S. flag. Likewise, in 2019, when Georgians protested Russian interference in their political system, they waved U.S. flags in the capital city of Tbilisi.

In Kosovo, Old Glory flies freely and proudly. "Our people were at risk of being exterminated, and it was the U.S. that stood by us," a Kosovar lawyer told NPR in 2018 as the tiny nation celebrated its 10th birthday.

Eastern Europe When U.S. armored units began arriving in Poland after Russia's 2014 seizure of Crimea, they were greeted by throngs of Poles waving American flags. They understand there's no greater friend of freedom – and no better deterrent against the forces of tyranny – than America's military.

With a revisionist Russia tearing through Ukraine and taking aim at the rest of Europe, Finnish Prime Minister Sanna Marin bluntly declared last year, "We would be in trouble without the United States."

Afghanistan As America scrambled to withdraw from Afghanistan in August 2021 – and a mix of chaos, terror and hopelessness filled the vacuum left in America's wake – desperate mothers gave their babies to U.S. soldiers and Marines. Handing their children over razor-wire barricades, they trusted America to do what's right because they understood that's what America strives to do. And America's defenders lived up to America's reputation. Those who think any soldier from any country would show the same kind of humanity forget what Saddam Hussein's soldiers did to Kurdish kids, what Slobodan Milosevic's men did to Bosnian boys, what PRC security forces are doing to Uighur mothers and babies, what Russian soldiers have done to Ukrainian maternity hospitals.

As Abdul Rahim Wardak, former Afghan defense minister, said of America, "Unlike the Russians, who destroyed our country, you came to rebuild" – a distinction underscored by what Afghanistan was before U.S. forces withdrew and what it is today.

Iran Students at Shahid Beheshti University in Tehran are using the U.S. flag to make a political statement: the terrorists and tyrants who rule Iran had the American flag painted onto campus sidewalks, forcing students to walk on the flag and thus insult America. But as the BBC reports, students are walking around the American flag – a quiet act of defiance against the regime.

Iraq U.S. flags fly from Kurdish homes in Iraq. Shops across Iraqi Kurdistan sell the Stars and Stripes. The reason: America protected Iraqi Kurdistan from Saddam's vengeance after the Gulf War, encouraged Kurdish autonomy after Saddam's toppling and supported Iraqi Kurds in the battle against the Islamic State. "Imagine if America didn't exist," a Kurdish businessman says. "Without America, the world would be run by China or Iran. America represents freedom."

Such sentiment isn't restricted to Iraqi Kurds. "Americans," former Iraqi Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi observes, "tend to believe negative propaganda against America .... Iraqis

recognize that the U.S. got rid of an evil dictator and helped build a democracy."

People's Republic of China As the PRC began to absorb Hong Kong in 2019 – in brazen violation of international treaties – thousands in that once-free city waved U.S. flags and sang "The Star-Spangled Banner."

Political scientist Francis Sempa reports that some of the courageous dissenters speaking out against Xi Jinping's COVID-19 lockdowns and Orwellian surveillance state do so under the slogan "Give me liberty or give me death!" – a phrase famously uttered by one of America's founding fathers, Patrick Henry.

Libya After the ouster of Moammar Qadhafi, Libyans waved U.S. flags at rallies, painted them onto buildings, and wore the Stars and Stripes on clothing. "I fly the flag," a Libyan airline pilot told *The Los Angeles Times*, "to support American-style freedoms that we all want .... It stands for freedom and democracy."

Cuba Tens of thousands of Cubans took to the streets of Havana in 2021 to protest shortages of food and medicine – and an absolute absence of liberty. Some wore T-shirts emblazoned with images of the Statue of Liberty. Others waved the U.S. flag. Predictably, Cuba's tyrant regime deployed secret police to smother the pro-freedom protests. But the message was sent: Cuba's longsuffering people want to be free, and they used symbols of the Land of the Free – not Vladimir Lenin, Che Guevara or Fidel Castro – to make their case.

Jefferson's words Historians at Monticello point out that since 1776, freedom-seeking peoples in 120 countries have imitated the Declaration of Independence in asserting their sovereignty and liberty. Our enemies understand the power of these words penned by Americans and these symbols of America. Why else would PRC censors demand Sony remove images of Lady Liberty from the 2021 movie "Spider-Man: No Way Home"? (Sony didn't comply.) Why else would Iran's tyranny have a factory that makes U.S. flags for the sole purpose of distributing them to be burned by regime rent-a-mobs?

The examples aren't limited to the national anthem, Lady Liberty and Old Glory. Although our culture tends to celebrate blame-America and even anti-American movements nowadays – the defacing of monuments to Lincoln and Grant, efforts to "de-name" schools honoring Washington and Jefferson, the disrespect for the flag and national anthem at public events, the poisoned version of U.S. history taught in many schools, the muzzling of free speech on college campuses – there are, happily, some exceptions.

Consider the musical "Hamilton," which tells the story of America's founding ideas. After setting records on Broadway, "Hamilton" has taken Britain and Australia by storm, is now playing in Germany and France, and is headed to Asia. Or consider the red-white-and-blue blockbuster "Top Gun: Maverick," which netted more overseas than in America.

Even in countries governed by regimes openly hostile to America, the power of American culture is undeniable. In Iran, six young adults posted a video on the made-in-America site YouTube of them dancing to Pharrell Williams' hit song "Happy." Their government sentenced them to a year in prison and 91 lashes.

Belgian children travel to Flanders Field American Cemetery to sing "The Star-Spangled Banner" every Memorial Day. They've done this since 1919.

U.S. Embassy photo

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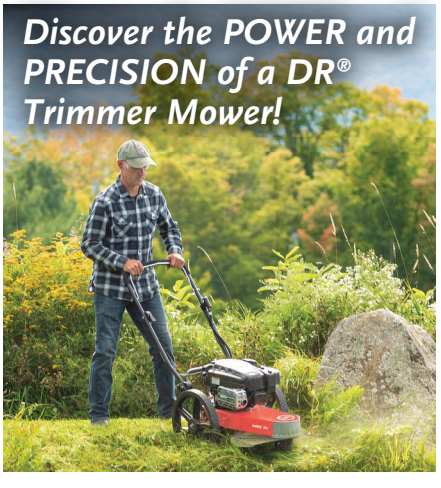

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Xi's diplomats mock "U.S.-style democracy" and harangue America to change its own image. Yet Xi's subjects seem to be recreating their country in America's image. KFC has more restaurants in China than in America. Starbucks opens a new store in China every 15 hours. When the popular TV show "The Big Bang Theory" was blocked by PRC censors, the people "went online to deem China 'West North Korea,'" *Foreign Policy* reports. And 56% of Chinese college students like America's political system, while just 28% like China's.

Happiness Why do peoples from faraway lands want to emulate America's culture and political system? Why do they use our flag, sing our national anthem, display our symbols and quote our founders to pursue their freedom? And why aren't they waving Russian and Chinese flags, wearing T-shirts with images of Red Square and the Great Wall, or flocking to musicals and movies about Lenin, Mao and the czars?

The answer is twofold, and we can hear it in the words of our neighbors overseas. First, as that Kurdish businessman matter-of-factly puts it, "America represents freedom." Russia, China, Iran and their ilk don't. Second, freedom is something "we all want," to quote that Libyan pilot – all Libyans and Africans, all Kosovars and Europeans, all Hongkongers and Asians, all Cubans and the peoples of the Americas.

"Freedom is one of the deepest and noblest aspirations of the human spirit," President Ronald Reagan explained. Tyrants want to eradicate it; America has always wanted to help it grow.

These anecdotes about freedom-seekers using America's flag and America's symbols to lay claim to their liberty aren't mirror-gazing myths, patriotic PR or CIA psyops. They are real, and exactly what the founders envisioned for America. The Declaration of Independence – with its stirring announcement that "all men are created equal" and "endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights ... life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" – was intended as a beacon of freedom. Jefferson saw America maturing into "an empire of liberty" destined to become the driving force for the "freedom of the globe."

There are replicas of Lady Liberty in more than 30 countries, including Argentina and Austria, Belarus and Britain, Japan and Germany, India and Israel, Taiwan and Thailand.

Envato

Knowing Jefferson's prediction is confirmed by all those around the world who wave America's flag to defy despots and grasp at freedoms most Americans take for granted.

In Tripoli and Tbilisi, Kiev and Kosovo, Hong Kong and Havana, they know that America's founding document triggered a global freedom revolution, that America tore itself apart to extirpate its original sin of slavery, that America is a great power and a good neighbor. Yazidis and Kurds know that America protected them from mass-murderers masquerading as holy men. Kuwaitis and Kosovars know that America delivered them from brutal neighbors. Vietnamese and Afghans know that America bled for them. West Germans and South Koreans know that America rescued them from the prisonyard of communism. The entire free world knows that America shielded religious freedom, political freedom and economic freedom from Nazism and Stalinism.

In the remote villages of Angola, Pakistan and Zambia, they may not know that American generosity, industry and ingenuity have rescued uncounted millions from AIDS, COVID-19 and malaria. But Americans should. They may not know in Somalia and Sumatra that Americans have shared uncounted billions providing food and shelter to those in need. But Americans should. The world's friendless and forgotten may not know that America has invested uncounted trillions serving as civilization's first responder and last line of defense. But Americans should.

Every American should know these things about America.

Alan W. Dowd is a senior fellow with the Sagamore Institute Center for America's Purpose.

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LORE OF THE LEGION

STORY: JEFF STOFFER
ART: AUSTIN POWELL
EDITOR: AUGUST UHL

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National Commander Vincent J. "Jim" Troiola opens the Legion's Spring Meetings.
Photo by Hilary Ott

"While politicians stubbornly fight over budgets and ideologies, our U.S. military continues to defend and protect us. … My message to Washington is this: The American Legion will always fight for the respect owed to our military, our veterans and their families."

American Legion National Commander Vincent J. "Jim" Troiola, speaking to the National Executive Committee about the Legion's continued veteran advocacy in the face of turmoil on Capitol Hill

"We believe it will take a little bit of time to get this off the ground. But once it spreads widely across the Legion Family, it will be a great way to keep the awareness high about this important issue all year long."

American Legion Marketing Commission Chairman Paul Evenson, on Resolution 13: Be the One Days, passed by the NEC on May 10-11. The resolution urges American Legion Family members and Legion posts to set aside the first day of every month, beginning June 1, as an opportunity to reduce the stigma around mental health issues. Legion Family members are encouraged to wear Be the One items to signal their commitment to the initiative.

SELECTED RESOLUTIONS OF THE SPRING MEETINGS

INTERNAL AFFAIRS

1 Establish pilot program offering purchase of three consecutive 12-month American Legion member terms at then-current dues rate

NATIONAL SECURITY

12 Endorses creation and implementation of Afghanistan War Commission to develop and examine lessons learned from the conflict to inform future decision-makers

VETERANS AFFAIRS & REHABILITATION

14 Urges Congress to hold VA and other relevant parties accountable for implementation and continuous functioning of electronic health record system

19 Opposes taxation of VA disability compensation benefits and requiring a veteran to be means-tested to qualify

VETERANS EMPLOYMENT & EDUCATION

8 Urges VA to expand Home Loan Guaranty Program eligibility to a veteran's dependent or surviving spouse or child

Read all 25 resolutions passed: ***legion.org/archive***

Not on the list

Britain did not invite representatives from Russia, Belarus, Iran, Myanmar, Syria, Afghanistan or Venezuela to attend the coronation ceremonies of King Charles III.

Wikimedia Commons

New and improved...Now more portable than ever.

"I haven't been this excited since I got my first bicycle!"

Introducing the new *ZOOMER!*

The portable, folding, battery-powered chair that offers easy one-handed operation

Remember when you were a child and got your first bicycle? I do. It gave me a sense of independence . . . I felt like I could go anywhere, and it was so much easier and more enjoyable than walking. Well, at my age, that bike wouldn't do me much good. Fortunately, there's a new invention that gives me the freedom and independence to go wherever I want . . . safely and easily. It's called the *Zoomer*, and it's changed my life.

My Zoomer is a delight to ride! It has increased my mobility in my apartment, my opportunities to enjoy the out-of-doors, and enabled me to visit the homes of my children for longer periods of time. The various speeds of it match my need for safety, it is easy to turn, and I am most pleased with the freedom of movement it gives me.
Sincerely, A. Macon, Williamsburg, VA

After just one trip around your home in the *Zoomer*, you'll marvel at how easy it is to navigate. It is designed to maneuver in tight spaces like doorways, between furniture, and around corners. It can go over thresholds and works great on any kind of floor or carpet. It's not bulky or cumbersome, so it can roll right up to a table or desk– there's no need to transfer to a chair. Its sturdy yet lightweight aluminum frame makes it durable and comfortable. Its dual motors power it at up to 3.7 miles per hour and its automatic electromagnetic brakes stop on a dime. The rechargeable battery powers it for up to 8 miles on a single charge. Plus, its exclusive foldable design enables you to transport it easily and even store

Folds to 12" in seconds

NEW split frame design makes it easier to lift

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The Zoomer Chair is a personal electric vehicle and is not a medical device nor a wheelchair. It is not intended for medical purposes to provide mobility to persons restricted to a sitting position. It is not covered by Medicare nor Medicaid.

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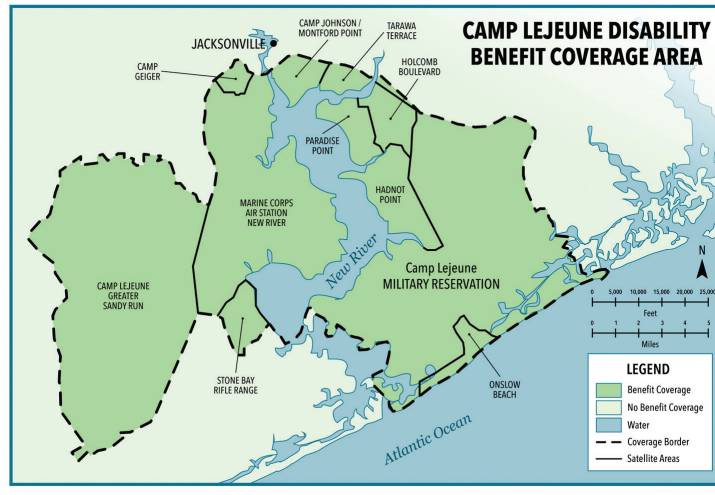
BERGMANN & MOORE: CAMP LEJEUNE JUSTICE ACT

Common questions, answers about Camp Lejeune lawsuit



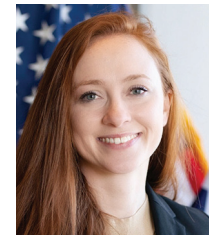
Since the passage of the PACT Act in August 2022, Liz Hartman, Bergmann & Moore's spokesperson to The American Legion, has traveled the country speaking at posts to ensure that Legionnaires and their families are educated on the truth about Camp Lejeune's toxic water litigation, known as the CLJA. Unfortunately, the airwaves continue to be full of bad information. The inaccurate and often misleading advertising is causing confusion among Legionnaires who are afraid to file a claim related to their toxic water exposure at Camp Lejeune.

Here are the most frequently asked questions and their corresponding answers:

What types of claims qualify under the CLJA? The short answer: Any condition. Although many firms focus only on the presumptive conditions recognized by the law, there are many conditions related to toxic water exposure that have been conclusively proven by medical evidence. We encourage any veteran or their family member who served/lived at Camp Lejeune between Aug. 1, 1953, and Dec. 31, 1987, to reach out for help in filing for any condition they think may be related to toxic water exposure.

Attorney fees - How much is too much? Congress has been unable to pass a law that limits attorney fees and costs. Most firms are charging fees (ranging from 25% to 50%) plus costs, which are not known until the end of the litigation and can be in the tens of thousands of dollars. Bergmann & Moore has capped its fees and costs to 33.33%. This means that regardless of medical development costs associated with the case, the veteran/claimant will never receive less than 66.67% of any court award.

I've lost confidence in the firm I signed with and want to change firms. What is the process? Firms cannot hold clients hostage. A simple communication in writing is all that is necessary: "I wish to discharge you as my attorney in my CLJA claim. Please return all documents I submitted." A response from the firm is not necessary. Rather, your letter (discharge notice) simply needs to be sent to the new firm, and they will ensure you will not have to pay the original firm.



Liz Hartman served in the Marine Corps as an Arabic linguist. If you have questions about CLJA, call her at **(252) 497-7255**. *If you're interested in filing a CLJA claim, you can speak to someone personally by calling* **(800) 898-9450** *or fill out the form at* **camplejeunelitigationteam.com/al**.

DVIDS

The states with the most active-duty troops are California (**157,639**), Virginia (**126,529**), Texas (**116,970**), North Carolina **(99,135**), Georgia (**69,391**), Florida (**64,318**), Washington (**61,771**), Hawaii (**40,539**), Colorado (**38,035**) and South Carolina (**37,467**).

More than half (**54.5%**) are located in six states (California, Virginia, Texas, North Carolina, Georgia and Florida). Source: Department of Defense

Words of Wisdom

Grandson Pendant and Valet Box

Words of Wisdom
To My Grandson…

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Learned lessons, old and new.
And now this wisdom of my life,
I'm blessed to share with you.

Learn to trust your feelings,
Your beliefs you should uphold.
Don't walk away from what is right,
Be courageous and be bold.

Keep faith beside you always,
It will guide you every day.
Know that strength comes from above,
And you will find your way.

Let yourself be humble,
And remember to be kind.
When you have respect for others,
True friendships you will find.

Have dignity and honor,
And be proud of all you do.
Confidence will take you toward
A future that waits for you.

The world is filled with choices—
There are challenges to face.
But you can make a difference
As you find your rightful place.

And so, I cannot wait to see
The wonders you will do,
Because you are my grandson,
And I am so proud of you.

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You have watched your wonderful grandson grow and change—and every moment has filled your life with joy. This personalized keepsake is a timeless gift for that special grandson—an everlasting reminder of your lessons in strength, love, faith, dignity, and in facing life's challenges head on. The hand-crafted solid stainless steel pendant is styled after a classic customized dog tag with raised, sculpted edges to give it a layered effect. Your grandson's initials are etched front and center, and surrounded by accents ion-plated in 24K gold. The back of the pendant is etched with the meaningful message, *"I am so Proud to Call You My Grandson."* The pendant suspends from a 24" stainless steel chain and arrives in a deluxe wooden valet box. It's a wonderful way to let your grandson know just how much you care.

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Signature

Mrs. Mr. Ms.

Name (Please Print Clearly)

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City State Zip

E-Mail (Optional)

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*Plus a total of $10.98 shipping and service (see bradfordexchange.com). Please allow 4-6 weeks for delivery after initial payment for shipment of your jewelry. Sales subject to product availability and order acceptance.

What to eat, do and experience in Charlotte

The American Legion National Convention returns this year to Charlotte, N.C., for the third time since 2002. Whether convention attendees will be visiting the Queen City again or for the first time, there are plenty of options for entertainment, food and more. Among the highlights:

C — Chow down. Various types of barbecue are found in North Carolina via the state's diverse population. Perhaps the most popular in Charlotte is Eastern-style, characterized by using every part of the hog. Eastern-style sauce is vinegar- and pepper-based, with no tomato.

H — Honor NASCAR's history. Connected to the Charlotte Convention Center is the NASCAR Hall of Fame. The venue is celebrating NASCAR's 75th anniversary with special features, in addition to its regular exhibits featuring drivers, cars and teams.

A — Activate your skills. Wind down from a busy day by challenging friends at one of the many places to test your playing skills. Among them: indoor miniature golf, bowling alleys with nontraditional menus, and the Super Abari Game Bar (arcade games).

R — Ride the rails. The 26-station, 19.3-mile LYNX Blue Line light rail is a good way to get from Uptown to nearby neighborhoods in Charlotte. It also connects to the CityLYNX Gold Line. The 4-mile-long streetcar line has 17 stops and connects the Historic West End through Center City Charlotte to the Elizabeth neighborhood.

L — Lose your illusion. The Museum of Illusions offers a mind-bending experience of optical illusions. (Note: The museum is wheelchair-accessible, but some rooms have slanted floors and are not accessible.)

O — Order different meals. The Market at 7th Street offers eclectic options for breakfast, lunch and dinner. The nonprofit culinary and retail incubator helps entrepreneurs and minority businesses grow while promoting the region's varied food and artisans.

T — Take in history. The Charlotte Regional History Consortium offers a wealth of resources, museums and other opportunities to learn about the region's history dating back centuries.

T — Tour the city. Horse carriage rides offer a laid-back, relaxed tour of the city. A plethora of options are available.

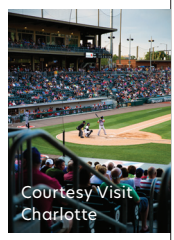
E — Explore the area. The NoDa (North Davidson) neighborhood offers a vibrant mix of food, drinks and artists. Take a mural tour through the city's art district.

For more details about convention-related events, resources and more, visit **legion.org/convention**.

- Henry Howard

Photos courtesy Visit Charlotte

Enjoy Legion Family Baseball Night in Charlotte


Courtesy Visit Charlotte

The Charlotte Knights will welcome the American Legion Family to Truist Field, near the Charlotte Convention Center, on Aug. 26. A Triple-A affiliate of the Chicago White Sox, the Knights will take on the Memphis Redbirds, with the first pitch at 7:04 p.m. Tickets are $16; the purchase deadline is Aug. 21. ***legion.org/convention/resources***

Media Training Workshop, TALMA awards

The American Legion Media & Communications Division will host an in-person and virtual Media Training Workshop on Aug. 28. The session will begin at 8:30 a.m. Eastern and conclude by 4 p.m., with a two-hour break for the TALMA awards luncheon. Topics include how to create QR codes for membership and donations, improve photography skills, design a newsletter and increase open rates, use and share VA's PTSD Coach app, create Be the One bracelets, start a podcast, and more. Registration opens July 1 at **legion.org/talma/workshop**. The workshop will be streamed live at **facebook.com/americanlegionhq**.

The luncheon is free to 2023 award recipients. For other members and guests, the price is $30. Registration opens July 1 at **legion.org/talma/banquet**.

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ON POINT

THE AMERICAN LEGION IN WASHINGTON

H.R. 41 – VA SAME-DAY SCHEDULING ACT OF 2023

"The scheduler can see all open appointment times and days for not only the VA provider but also the community care provider to which the veteran was referred. Scheduling an appointment takes an average of about seven minutes."

American Legion Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Director Tiffany Ellett, in testimony March 29 before the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, Subcommittee on Health, referencing a pilot single sign-on program that has cut appointment-scheduling wait times at the William Jennings Bryan Dorn VA Medical Center in Columbia, S.C.

The American Legion, specifically through **Resolution 15** passed by the National Executive Committee in October 2022, supports a legislative mandate to ensure any veteran enrolled in the VA health-care system can get a VA medical center appointment time the same day the call is made to schedule one.

Scheduling has improved through online systems and updated apps, according to the testimony, but "veterans still face difficulties scheduling an appointment. By phone, many veterans successfully obtain an appointment while others may go weeks without a follow-up."

The American Legion testimony noted that scheduling tools like the VA Online Scheduling portal and My HealtheVet have made progress against delayed appointment times, and VA has also made efforts to be more transparent by giving veterans the ability to look up provider wait times through the **accesstocare.va.gov** website.

The frustration of delayed appointment scheduling, however, persists and varies depending on the Veterans Integrated Services Network region.

Space Force

"We only recruit several hundred a year, rather than thousands and thousands and thousands. So it's an easier challenge. But I will tell you, we have more people knocking on our door than we can take."

Gen. John "Jay" Raymond, the Space Force's first chief of space operations, who held the role from 2019 to 2022

532 Target number of enlisted personnel, with 42 officers, to be sworn into the Space Force in fiscal 2023

8,400 Approximate number of Space Force active-duty personnel

Source: thenewstack.io

MY GI BILL VETERANS & EDUCATION BY VALERIE HEFFNER

Check your Chapter 35 program certification

Q: *Prior to enrolling in college, my wife applied for Chapter 35 Survivors' and Dependents' Education Assistance, and has been approved by VA. She enrolled in the Nieman journalism fellowship program at Harvard University, but the adviser did not know if it was approved for Chapter 35. What are the steps to ensure this program is approved for VA benefits?*

A: When a school publishes a new catalog, it must request an approval for each program or certificate from the state approving agency (SAA). The SAA is responsible for evaluation, approval and oversight of all schools and training facilities to ensure state and federal quality criteria are met for the use of GI Bill benefits. VA has a website, WEAMS Public, listing all approved programs. If you don't see the program on the list, contact University Student Financial Services at Harvard. If the program is approved, the school certifying official will certify the classes for payment.

Valerie Heffner is a Marine Corps veteran and member of American Legion Post 27 in Apache Junction, Ariz. ***askvalerie@ legion.org***

ADVERTISEMENT

Popular CoQ10 Pills Leave Millions Suffering

Could this newly-discovered brain fuel solve America's worsening memory crisis?

PALM BEACH, FLORIDA — Millions of Americans take the supplement known as CoQ10. It's the coenzyme that supercharges the "energy factories" in your cells known as *mitochondria*. But there's a serious flaw that's leaving millions unsatisfied.

As you age, your mitochondria break down and fail to produce energy. In a revealing study, a team of researchers showed that 95 percent of the mitochondria in a 90-year-old man were damaged, compared to almost no damage in the mitochondria of a 5-year-old.

Taking CoQ10 alone is not enough to solve this problem. Because as powerful as CoQ10 is, there's one critical thing it fails to do: it can't create new mitochondria to replace the ones you lost.

And that's bad news for Americans all over the country. The loss of cellular energy is a problem for the memory concerns people face as they get older.

"We had no way of replacing lost mitochondria until a recent discovery changed everything," says Dr. Al Sears, founder and medical director of the Sears Institute for Anti-Aging Medicine in Palm Beach, Florida. "Researchers discovered the only nutrient known to modern science that has the power to trigger the growth of new mitochondria."

Why Taking CoQ10 is Not Enough

Dr. Sears explains, "This new discovery is so powerful, it can multiply your mitochondria by 55 percent in just a few weeks. That's the equivalent of restoring decades of lost brain power."

This exciting nutrient — called PQQ *(pyrroloquinoline quinone)* — is the driving force behind a revolution in aging. When paired with CoQ10, this dynamic duo has the power to reverse the age-related memory losses you may have thought were beyond your control.

Dr. Sears pioneered a new formula — called **Ultra Accel II** — that combines both CoQ10 and PQQ to support maximum cellular energy and the normal growth of new mitochondria. **Ultra Accel II** is the first of its kind to address both problems and is already creating huge demand.

Over 47 million doses have been shipped to men and women across the country and sales continue to climb for this much sought-after brain fuel. In fact, demand has been so overwhelming that inventories repeatedly sell out. But a closer look at **Ultra Accel II** reveals there are good reasons why sales are booming.

Science Confirms the Many Benefits of PQQ

The medical journal *Biochemical Pharmacology* reports that PQQ is up to 5,000 times more efficient in sustaining energy production than common antioxidants. With the ability to keep every cell in your body operating at full strength, **Ultra Accel II** delivers more than just added brain power and a faster memory.

People feel more energetic, more alert, and don't need naps in the afternoon. The boost in cellular energy generates more power to your heart, lungs, muscles, and more.

"With the PQQ in Ultra Accel, I have energy I never thought possible at my age," says Colleen R., one of Dr. Sears's patients. "I'm in my 70s but feel 40 again. I think clearly, move with real energy and sleep like a baby."

The response has been overwhelmingly positive, and Dr. Sears receives countless emails from his patients and readers. "My patients tell me they feel better than they have in years. This is ideal for people who are feeling old and run down, or for those who feel more forgetful. It surprises many that you can add healthy and productive years to your life simply by taking **Ultra Accel II** every day."

You may have seen Dr. Sears on television or read one of his 12 best-selling books. Or you may have seen him speak at the 2016 WPBF 25 Health and Wellness Festival in South Florida, featuring Dr. Oz and special guest Suzanne Somers. Thousands of people attended Dr. Sears's lecture on anti-aging breakthroughs and waited in line for hours during his book signing at the event.

Will Ultra Accel II Multiply Your Energy?

Ultra Accel II is turning everything we thought we knew about youthful energy on its head. Especially for people over age 50. In less than 30 seconds every morning, you can harness the power of this breakthrough discovery to restore peak energy and your "spark for life."

So, if you've noticed less energy as you've gotten older, and you want an easy way to reclaim your youthful edge, this new opportunity will feel like blessed relief.

The secret is the "energy multiplying" molecule that activates a dormant gene in your body that declines with age, which then instructs your cells to pump out fresh energy from the inside-out. This growth of new "energy factories" in your cells is called mitochondrial biogenesis.

MEMORY-BUILDING SENSATION: Top doctors are now recommending new *Ultra Accel II* because it restores decades of lost brain power without a doctor's visit.

Instead of falling victim to that afternoon slump, you enjoy sharp-as-a-tack focus, memory, and concentration from sunup to sundown. And you get more done in a day than most do in a week. Regardless of how exhausting the world is now.

Dr. Sears reports, "The most rewarding aspect of practicing medicine is watching my patients get the joy back in their lives. **Ultra Accel II** sends a wake-up call to every cell in their bodies… And they actually feel young again."

And his patients agree. "I noticed a difference within a few days," says Jerry from Ft. Pierce, Florida. "My endurance has almost doubled, and I feel it mentally, too. There's a clarity and sense of well-being in my life that I've never experienced before."

How To Get Ultra Accel II

This is the official nationwide release of **Ultra Accel II** in the United States. And so, the company is offering a special discount supply to anyone who calls during the official launch.

An Order Hotline has been set up for local readers to call. This gives everyone an equal chance to try **Ultra Accel II**. And your order is backed up by a no-hassle, 90-day money back guarantee. No questions asked.

Starting at 7:00 AM today, the discount offer will be available for a limited time only. All you have to do is call TOLL FREE **1-800-604-7758** right now and use promo code **AMLUA623** to secure your own supply.

Important: Due to **Ultra Accel II** recent media exposure, phone lines are often busy. If you call and do not immediately get through, please be patient and call back.

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FOCUS ON FINANCES BY J.J. MONTANARO

How to tackle rising auto insurance premiums

In the past couple of years, the property insurance industry has struggled with rapid inflation, supply-chain issues, rising repair costs and numerous natural catastrophes. The result: billions of dollars of losses. As insurance companies scramble to catch up, you may be paying a lot more for your auto and property coverage and looking for ways to help lower your rates. Here are a few avenues to explore:

Update discounts Defensive driving and good-student discounts are just a couple of ways you may be able to save. Many carriers offer behavior- and usage-based insurance plans with rates based on how much and how safely you drive. These are great options for safe drivers and those working remotely. Make sure you're getting every cost reduction for which you're eligible.

Increase deductibles The higher the deductible you choose, the lower the premium. Remember, though, that the deductible is what you'd be required to pay if something goes amiss. Have at least that amount set aside in savings before using this strategy.

Drop coverage Lenders typically require comprehensive and collision coverage, but if you own an older vehicle outright, you may be able to save by dropping this coverage (not your liability coverage, which is required). This could leave you in a bind, though, if your car is seriously damaged or totaled in an accident or by severe weather. Again, make sure the liability coverage (bodily injury, property damage, etc.) your auto policy provides is aligned to protect your financial assets; this is an area where you don't want to come up short.

Save with multiple products Insurance is a business, and insurers want yours. That's why many provide savings or discounts for additional products or lines of coverage. More coverage in one place could mean savings.

Automatic payment Set up an automatic draft from a checking account or a recurring payment, and you could save a few dollars. An added bonus: You won't forget to pay and incur a late penalty.

Drive safely A good driving record is of course going to help with auto insurance rates. Pay attention to speed limits, save eating for the dinner table, finish your makeup before leaving home, and remember that texting and phone calls can wait.

There are many ways to cut costs, but do it in a way that doesn't put you in financial jeopardy.

J.J. Montanaro is a certified financial planner with USAA, The American Legion's preferred provider of financial services. ***legion.org/usaa***

Is a transferable-on-death gift right for you?

Harold and Jeanne married after meeting at an American Legion event for donors. They wanted to leave a legacy gift that would support the organization and ensure it remains financially strong.

Envato

"We talked to our investment adviser about planning goals and explained that we wanted to support the Legion," Jeanne says. "He suggested a simple solution: naming it as a beneficiary of one of our mutual funds."

Their adviser explained that because the couple jointly own the account, a "transferable on death" (TOD) beneficiary designation form would ensure they benefit from the mutual fund during retirement, the surviving spouse will continue to own it for the rest of their life, and the mutual fund will be transferred to The American Legion after they're both gone.

"I like knowing that if I pass away first, Jeanne will have enough to meet her needs," Harold adds. "We both like knowing the Legion will receive the mutual fund after both of us pass away. We couldn't be happier with our giving strategy."

If you own stocks, bonds or mutual funds and would like to make a gift to leave a legacy and support The American Legion, consider a TOD gifting strategy. To learn more or ask questions, contact the Legion's Office of Charitable Giving at **(317) 630-1225**, **plannedgiving@legion.org** or **legion.giftlegacy.com**.

A star for Buzz Aldrin

DVIDS

Apollo 11 astronaut Buzz Aldrin, the second man to set foot on the lunar surface, has been promoted to brigadier general.

As Space.com reports, the longtime Air Force colonel received the one-star rank during ceremonies at Los Angeles Air Force Base. Aldrin also added an honorary Space Force appointment, "guardian," to his lifetime of achievements.

In addition to serving in NASA's Apollo and Gemini programs, Aldrin flew 66 combat missions during the Korean War and received the Presidential Medal of Freedom, Congressional Gold Medal, Air Force Distinguished Service Medal, Legion of Merit, two Distinguished Flying Crosses and three Air Medals.

$7.2 billion Value of military equipment left behind when the United States left Afghanistan in 2021

78 Military aircraft left behind

9,500 Air-to-ground munitions left behind

40,000+ Vehicles left behind

300,000+ Weapons left behind

64 Aircraft Afghan pilots flew to Uzbekistan and Tajikistan to avoid capture

Sources: Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, *Washington Examiner*

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How to submit a reunion

The American Legion Magazine publishes reunion notices for veterans. Send notices to ***The American Legion Magazine,* Attn: Reunions, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206,** e-mail **reunions@legion.org** or submit information online at **legion.org/reunions**.

Include the branch of service and complete name of the group, no abbreviations, with your request. The listing also should include the reunion dates and city, along with a contact name, telephone number and e-mail address. Listings are free.

Notices will remain online until the final day of the reunion. Upon submission, allow three months for your reunion to be published in print. **Due to the large number of reunions, *The American Legion Magazine* will publish a group's listing twice a year.**

Other notices

"In Search Of" is a means of getting in touch with people from your unit to plan a reunion. **We do not publish listings that seek people for interviews, research purposes, military photos or help in filing a VA claim.** Listings must include the name of the unit from which you seek people, the time period and the location, as well as a contact name, phone number and e-mail address. Send notices to ***The American Legion Magazine,* Attn: "In Search Of," P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206** or e-mail **reunions@legion.org**.

The magazine will not publish names of individuals, only the name of the unit. Listings are free.

Life Membership notices are published for Legionnaires who have been awarded life memberships by their posts. **This does not include a member's own Paid-Up-For-Life membership.**

Notices must be submitted on official forms, which may be obtained by sending a self-addressed stamped envelope to ***The American Legion Magazine*, Attn: Life Memberships, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206**.

"Comrades in Distress" listings must be approved by the Legion's Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Division. If you are seeking to verify an injury received during service, contact your American Legion department service officer for information on how to publish a notice.

To respond to a "Comrades in Distress" listing, send a letter to ***The American Legion Magazine*, Attn: Comrades in Distress, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206**. Include the listing's CID number in your response.

"Taps" notices are published only for Legionnaires who served as department commanders or national officers.

AIR FORCE / ARMY AIR FORCES

51st Bomb Sqdn (H), Goldsboro, NC, 10/31-11/3, Gary Ambrose, (703) 395-2621, 51stbsq@gmail.com; **410th Security Police Sqdn,** Little Lake, MI, 7/7-8, Elaine Bowman, (256) 492-3166, eskie36@gmail.com; **Society of Air Force Nurses,** Albuquerque, NM, 10/8-13, Kathy Reynolds, (916) 212-9949, kjnursereynolds@att.net

ARMY

1st Sig Bde, Kansas City, MO, 9/20-24, Bob Van Pelt, (518) 210-2868, bvpcsm@aol.com; **1st Sqdn 1st Cav Assn,** Gettysburg, PA, 8/30-9/3, John Murphy, (914) 525-7704, johnnygg3@yahoo.com; **7/13th Arty (Vietnam),** Saratoga Springs, NY, 9/24-28, Robert Adams, (859) 806-5199, cavnam67@gmail.com; **19th Cbt Eng Bn & Attached Units (Vietnam),** St. Robert, MO, 9/7-9, Harry Ewald, (845) 781-3421, harry.ewald@verizon.net; **31st Inf Rgt,** Inman, NY, 9/14-17, Charlie Tapp, (864) 680-9165, ctapp94@gmail.com; **59th Land Clearing Co,** Keystone, SD, 10/12-15, Roger Smith, (801) 915-2826, bushwacker59@comcast.net; **205th MP Co (Mar 1971-Jan 1973),** Fort Leavenworth, KS, 9/6, Larry Grebe, (574) 209-0273, ldgrebe@gmail.com; **249th Eng Bn "Black Lions,"** San Antonio, 9/21-24, Robin Wandell, (660) 815-1166, firewoodfriends@hotmail.com; **504th MP,** Cherokee, NC, 9/11-14, Charles "Tony" Sills, (770) 330-5236, ctsills7147@bellsouth.net; **815th Eng Bn 102nd Eng Co & Attached Units,** Fort Benning, GA, 10/12-14, Burton Hewitt, (706) 566-5147, burton.hewitt@gmail.com; **95B20 A Co 94th MP Bn (Baumholder, Germany),** Waterloo, IA, 8/19-20, Steve Kauffman, (319) 795-0604, sweetpeatmk@hotmail.com; **A Co 1/8 4th Inf Div (Vietnam),** Branson, MO, 9/25-28, Ken McCormack, (619) 997-0176, kenmac1@cox.net; **Army Security Agency (Chitose, Japan),** Charleston, SC, 9/13-17, William Mitchell, (989) 835-7803, mitchell4142@sbcglobal.net; **B Co 2/327th Inf 101st Abn (Vietnam, 1967-1970),** Branson, MO, 9/18-22, Bill Spielman, (402) 432-0635, bspiel7607@aol.com; **Cbt Equipment Grp Europe (CEGE),** Colorado Springs, CO, 9/28-10/1, Steve Shirley, (804) 446-3246, shirimpala@aol.com; **D/2/16 1st Inf Div (1967-1970),** Kingman, AZ, 10/5-7, Don Dignan, (734) 525-0157, dondignan@sbcglobal.net; **Herzo Base, Germany (ASA),** Gettysburg, PA, 9/15-17, Joe Connelly, (856) 939-4690, mrcon2@comcast.net; **Korea Defense Vets,** Pigeon Forge, TN, 8/4-6, Chris Murphy, (828) 502-2802, koreaveterans@gmail.com; **Old Guard Assn, 3rd Inf Rgt,** Arlington, VA, 9/20-23, Mike Winter, (619) 571-7204, theoldguardassociation@gmail.com

JOINT

***Burton Island* AG 88/WAGB 283,** Norfolk, VA, 9/25-29, Doug Huckins, (831) 402-2883, jdhuck@att.net

MARINES

26th Mar Assn, Branson, MO, 8/25-27, Sonny Hollub, (512) 825-4730, sonnyusmc@gmail.com; **Alpha Co 1st Bn 5th Mar Rgt 1st Mar Div (All Wars),** Haslet, TX, 7/2-5, Vincent Rios, (817) 847-9954; **VMFA-115 (All Yrs),** Portland, ME, 10/11-15, Patti Kaas, (717) 422-6796, vmfa115reunion@gmail.com

NAVY

AIRDEVRON Six (VX-6) & Antarctic DEVRON Six (VXE-6) "Puckered Penguins," Pensacola, FL, 10/15-20, Bob McCauley, (702) 338-4383, bobmccauley2@cox.net; **Assn of Minemen,** Nashville, TN, 9/11-14, Nathan Miranda, (626) 824-0727, assocminemen@yahoo.com; ***Barnstable County* LST 1197,** Louisville, KY, 10/2-5, Scott Gulbransen, (352) 339-0605; **Bathyscaphe Trieste Alumni Assn,** Bremerton, WA, 9/8-10, Stan Reinhold, (623) 332-1764, stanreinhold@gmail.com; ***Bausell* DD 845,** Dayton, OH, 9/21-25, Randy Holton, (614) 332-4540, bausell2023@yahoo.com; ***Black* DD 666,** Branson, MO, 9/19-22, Lewis Morris, (319) 378-9116, morrisle@aol.com; ***Damato* DD/DDE 871,** Branson, MO, 10/12-15, Dan Ray, (407) 256-6745, dgray55@cfl.rr.com; ***Grand Canyon* AD/AR 28,** Norfolk, VA, 10/2-4, Ken Morales, (618) 407-1423, k_morales1949@yahoo.com; ***Henderson* DD 785,** Rapid City, SD, 9/13-18, Al Meeds, (704) 995-2874, 1xhendy@gmail.com; ***Hollister* DD 788,** Fairfax, VA, 9/20-24, Casey Orr, (319) 651-9426, cworr78@gmail.com; ***Jerome County* LST 848,** Louisville, KY, 10/2-5, Dennis Hager, (410) 474-9072, dennishager@comcast.net; ***Jouett* DLG/CG 29,** Branson, MO, 9/20-23, Terry George, (814) 229-7898, terryegeorge@hotmail.com; ***Little Rock* CLG/CG 4 & Mar Det,** Norfolk, VA, 8/23-27, Robert Waltz, (330) 831-2649, usslittlerock.org; **LSM/LSMR (All Ships, All Yrs),** Louisville, KY, 10/2-5, Angela D'Aloisio, (803) 865-5665, support@nehemiahcommunications.com; **LST Assn,** Louisville, KY, 10/2-5, Angela D'Aloisio, (803) 865-5665, support@nehemiahcommunications.com; ***Mansfield* DD 728,** Charleston, SC, 10/18-22, Randy Smith, (434) 760-0418, mrolds17@yahoo.com; ***Mars* AFS 1,** Minneapolis, 9/13-17, Ed Biddle, (713) 899-5035, edbid@yahoo.com; **Navy Cargo Handlers,** Williamsburg, VA, 9/12-14, Michael Gorton, (646) 236-8347, mgorton@msn.com; **Navy Public Affairs Assn,** Arlington, VA, 9/8-9, Brian Gray, (703) 750-3716, usnpaaprodev@gmail.com; ***Park County* LST 1077,** Louisville, KY, 10/2-5, Mike Kempf, (317) 490-4229, koby.43@icloud.com; **PBR Forces Veterans Assn,** Norfolk, VA, 9/27-30, David Sosnowski, (215) 307-8689, 1.night.heron@gmail.com; ***Saginaw* LST 1188,** Louisville, KY, 10/2-5, Angela D'Aloisio, (803) 865-5665, support@nehemiahcommunications.com; ***Sutter County* LST 1150,** Louisville, KY, 10/2-5, Guy Simmons, (978) 476-3895, guysimmons@aol.com; ***Towers* DDG 9,** Silverdale, WA, 9/19-24, Raymond Wong, (415) 601-6285, usstowersddg9@pacbell.net; **VA/VFA-25 "Fist of the Fleet" Assn,** Pensacola, FL, 11/2-5, Charles Webster, (605) 380-5827, cwebster@nrctv.com; **VA-106/VF-62,** Charleston, SC, 10/8-10, Bud Huuki, (906) 353-6465, gunnerh@up.net; ***Wexford County* LST 1168,** Louisville, KY, 10/2-5, Larry Condra, (314) 604-5221, larrygeec@netscape.net; ***Wichita* AOR 1,** Las Vegas, 11/10-12, Thomas Verville, (520) 240-5422, tvervi@gmail.com

IN SEARCH OF

72nd Eng (Fort Benning, GA, 1984-1988), Charles Dvorak, (402) 292-0526

A Co 1st Eng Bn 1st Inf Div (Vietnam, Dec 1966-Dec 1967), Bob McDonald, (630) 986-0634, ktdmcdonald@comcast.net

B Btry 2nd Bn 60th Air Defense Arty Low Flying Air Defense (Ramstein, Germany, 1972-1974), Gary Shoop, (419) 706-9381, garyshoop1954@gmail.com

TAPS

Maurice Arthur, Dept. of New York. Nat'l Americanism Cncl. Memb. 2013-2017 and Nat'l Distinguished Guests Cmte. Vice Chmn. 2008-2013.

Ron D. Hanger, Dept. of Indiana. Nat'l Americanism Cncl. Memb. 2013-2023 and Nat'l Distinguished Guests Cmte. Vice Chmn. 2005-2013.

Steven L. Huisman, Dept. of Alaska. Dept. Cmdr. 2012-2013, Nat'l Exec. Cmte. Alt. Memb. 2016-2018 and 2020 to 2022, Nat'l Exec. Cmte. Memb. 2018-2020, Nat'l Marketing Cmsn. Liaison Cmte. Memb. 2019-2020, Nat'l Security Cncl. Memb. 2006-2018, Nat'l Veterans Employment & Education Cmsn. Liaison Cmte. Memb. 2018-2019, Nat'l Veterans Employment & Education Cmsn. Memb. 2020-2023, and Foreign & Outlying Departments and Posts of The American Legion (FODPAL) Pres. 2022-2023.

Raymond Lockett, Dept. of Virginia. Nat'l American Legion Insurance Cmte. Memb. 2010-2012 and Nat'l Americanism Cncl. Memb. 2012-2023.

John J. Michalski, Dept. of Indiana. Dept. Cmdr. 2001-2002, Nat'l American Legion Magazine Cmsn. Memb. 2008-2013, Nat'l Distinguished Guests Cmte. Vice Chmn. 1988-2001 and Nat'l Military Affairs Cmte. Memb. 2001-2008.

Robert E. Phillips Sr., Dept. of New Jersey. Dept. Cmdr. 2009-2010.

Vernon J. Sip, Dept. of South Dakota. Dept. Cmdr. 2001-2002.

Elgin Wahlborg, Dept. of Kansas. Nat'l Vice Cmdr. 2006-2007, Dept. Cmdr. 2001-2002, Nat'l Exec. Cmte. Alt. Memb. 2004-2006 and 2008-2016, Nat'l Security Cmsn. Memb. 2004-2006 and 2007-2017, Nat'l Security Cncl. Vice Chmn. 2002-2004 and Nat'l Youth Cadet Law Enforcement Cmte. Memb. 2016-2019.

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New Libido-Powering Pill Helps Men Enjoy Long-Lasting Intimacy - At Any Age

Men across America are raving about a newly enhanced potency supplement that helps achieve healthy blood flow on demand

After age 40, it's common knowledge that performance begins to decline in many men. However, a new, performance empowering pill is showing that any relatively healthy man can now enjoy long-lasting, and frequent intimacy – at any age.

This doctor-designed formula, created by leading anti-aging expert Dr. Al Sears, has already helped men overcome low and sinking libido -- and has recently undergone a potency-enhancing update – with remarkable new results.

When the first pill -- **Primal Max Black** -- was first released, it quickly became a top-selling men's performance helper, promoting intimacy across America.

It worked by supporting healthy testosterone levels. However, Dr. Sears soon realized that this isn't the only challenge men face with performance. That's when he turned his attention to blood flow.

And this became **Primal Max Red**.

PROBLEM IS,RESULTS ARE MORE MECHANICAL THAN HORMONAL

Truth is, once blood flow slows down for men, no matter how exciting it is, it won't be enough without the necessary amount…

So enjoying intimacy without healthy blood flow becomes difficult for most men.

Luckily, a Nobel prize-winning scientist discovered the simple answer to help support performance strength and confidence -- by boosting vital blood flow -- and enhancing this essential performance function.

Using this landmark Nobel Prize as its basis, **Primal Max Red** enhanced healthy blood flow for untold millions of men around the world with the use of strong nitric oxide boosters.

While **Primal Max Black** helped maintain optimal testosterone, **Primal Max Red** tackles a lesser-known challenge.

Director, Al Sears MD, who has authored over 500 scientific papers and has appeared on more than 50 media outlets including ABC News, CNN, ESPN, Discovery, National Geographic, Lifetime, and many more say, *"Less than optimal blood flow can be part of a huge problem that affects a lot of men. And it needed to be addressed once and for all, so men would not dwell on it. Then, once we optimized it and had a great deal of success, we set out to see if we could do even better."*

The former formula had excellent results. However, new research showed that for even faster, anytime, anywhere results, increasing the dose of a key compound was needed.

So, one of the three nitric oxide boosters in the new **Primal Max Red**, L-Citrulline, was clinically boosted to 9000 mg, and the results were astounding. Which is no surprise considering that 5000 mg is considered a "normal amount" -- giving the new version nearly doubled the blood flow boosting power.

Men who had previously been unsure about their power and stamina were overjoyed to be back to their old selves and to get and maintain a healthy bloodflow when they needed it.

A new discovery that increases nitric oxide availability was recently proven to boost blood flow 275% - resulting in improved performance.

BETTER BLOOD FLOW, STRONGER RESULTS

The best way to promote healthy blood flow throughout the body is with the use of **Primal Max Red**. By using it, when exciting signals leave the brain, blood flows much faster like it used to.

This critical action is how men across the country are enjoying full and satisfying performance at any age. No need to bother with testosterone-boosting shots, blue pills, or shady capsules that have no effect.

Primal Max Red can effectively promote healthy blood flow that most men can use for maximum intimacy. This is leading to more greater capacity and satisfaction, coupled with long-lasting performance.

"There was a time when men had little control when it came to boosting their blood flow," Dr. Sears said. "But science has come a long way in recent years. And now, with the creation of nitric oxide-boosting **Primal Max Red**, men can perform better than ever, and enjoy intimacy at any age."

Now for men across America, it's much easier to stay at their performance peak as they get older.

HOW TO GET PRIMAL MAX RED (AND FREE PRIMAL MAX BLACK):

To secure free bottles of **Primal Max Black** and get the hot, new **Primal Max Red** formula, buyers should contact the Sears Health Hotline at **1-800-908-0996** TODAY. "It's not available in retail stores yet," says Dr. Sears. "The Hotline allows us to ship directly to the customer." Dr. Sears feels so strongly about **Primal Max**, all orders are backed by a 100% money-back guarantee. "Just send me back the bottle and any unused product within 90 days from purchase date, and I'll send you all your money back."

Call NOW at **1-800-908-0996** to secure your supply of **Primal Max Red** and free bottles of **Primal Max Black**. Use Promo Code **AMLPMX623** when you call. Lines are frequently busy, but all calls will be answered!

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The older I get, the earlier it gets late.

WHY AREN'T there knock-knock jokes about America? Because freedom rings.

DURING A HEAT WAVE, a man went to a store to buy a hand fan. There were two, similar in make and model, but one was 25 cents and the other 50 cents. The man opted for the cheaper one. Before he left the store, the owner tried to tell the man how they worked, but he wasn't interested; a fan is a fan is a fan, and he knew how to work it.

The 25-cent fan broke. The man came back, yelling that the fan was no good. The owner explained that he should have stayed for the operating instructions.

"With the 50-cent fan, you move your wrist left and right to get the air flowing," he said. "With the 25-cent fan, you hold the fan steady in your wrist and move your head left to right."

ONE SNAIL said to another, "You know how my wife took the kids and left last spring? You want to know the most hurtful part?"

"What is it?" the other snail asked.

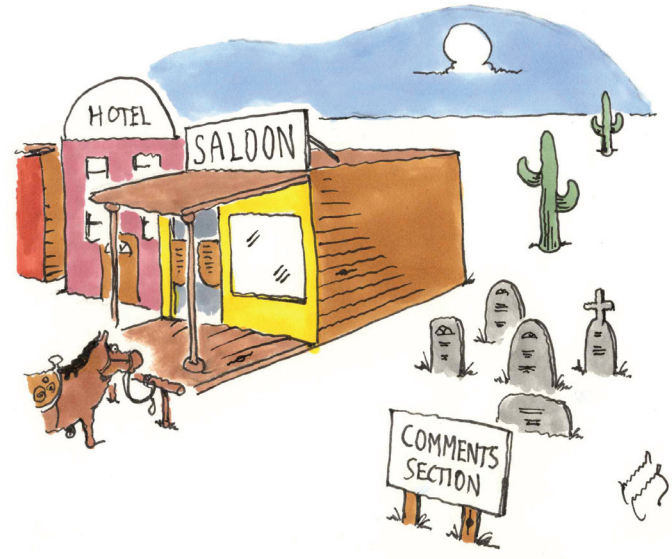
"I can still see them there in that bend."

A MECHANIC was removing the cylinder heads from a car engine when he spotted a famous heart surgeon standing off to the side, waiting for the service manager to come take a look at his Mercedes.

The mechanic shouted, "Come on over here a minute!" The surgeon walked over. The mechanic wiped his hands on a rag and said, "OK, Doc, look here. I open hearts, take valves out, grind 'em, put in new parts, and when I finish, this baby will purr like a kitten. So how come you get the big bucks when we're doing basically the same work?"

The doctor leaned over and whispered, "Try doing it with the engine running."

"I THINK I gamble too much. I don't even use a cellphone case. But when I drop my phone and it doesn't crack, I feel a rush, like I won $800." – *Eric Sobczak*



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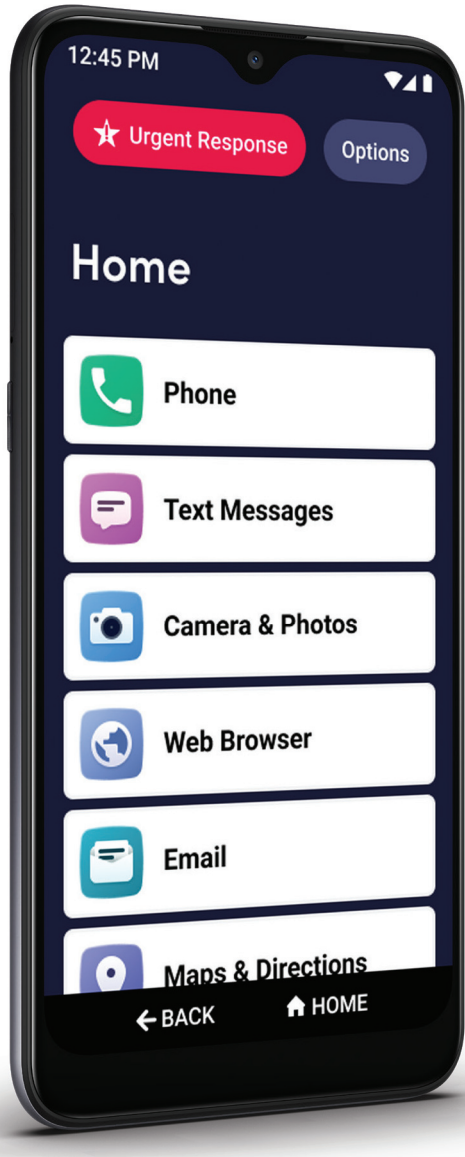

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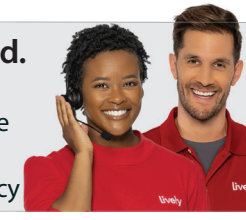

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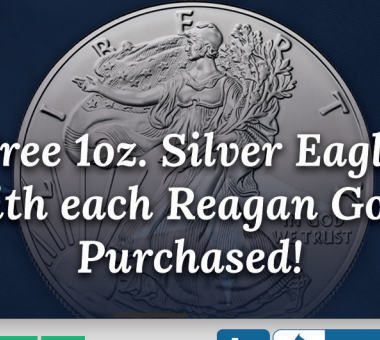

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